

Robert Cubby
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Testimony Supporting House Bills 5075 & 5076
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My name is Bob Cubby and I currently live in Bay City. One year ago I was living in Traverse City with my wife Terry. While at work Terry had a bad fall and suffered a serious closed head injury. She was eventually flown from Traverse City to the University of Michigan hospital in Ann Arbor, where she was placed in the Neurosurgical ICU. Terry was 62 when this all happened.

Upon arrival the hospital staff made sure that I signed a Fives Wishes document to outline what would be done regarding life-sustaining treatment for Terry. I gathered some witnesses and the Five Wishes document was signed and witnessed. At that time no one knew for sure if Terry would recover.

I did not have unreasonable expectations that the doctors would have a miracle cure for my wife. But there were some parts of her treatment I thought were necessary to continue to see if her brain would show signs of improving. If she did not improve, I understood that there might not be a way to save her. I was prepared for that too.

A week before Terry's death, the hospital's social staff presented me with another document to be added to the Five Wishes that would have essentially given the staff and doctors at the hospital the durable power of attorney for Terry instead of me. In no way would I sign or agree to the added document. When I refused to sign it, they told me it may not matter as they could just go to court and get a guardian appointed to replace me.

On the evening of her passing away, the head doctor said to me your wife will die tonight and said he had no intention of resuscitating her. Right after that conversation the staff urged me to "take a break" and go get some dinner. By the time I returned, Terry had passed away. I sincerely think that the staff didn't want me there when they took her off support.

They never had agreement or consent from me to do that. As I said, I was prepared to accept stopping support in a reasonable amount of time. But the hospital decided my wife was out of time. We need these House Bills to protect people like my wife and me. Making decisions about not resuscitating a patient cannot be made by doctors alone. And hospitals have no right to become guardians when a power of attorney is in place or the family is there supporting the patient. Please vote yes on these bills.